



# AHIS251

## The New Testament in its Times

S1 External 2018

*Dept of Ancient History*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Senior Lecturer

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Contact via Email (above) or (02) 9850 8821

Australian Hearing Hub, Level 2 S, W95

TBA

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit is a study of the New Testament within the political, social and cultural context of the Jewish and Graeco-Roman world of the first century CE. The unit is based on New Testament documents and other contemporary evidence, and investigates: the historical contours of the period and career of Jesus and the early Christian communities; and the literary genres and ideas of the New Testament in their Jewish and Graeco-Roman context.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;

engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;  
and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## General Assessment Information

With the exception of the Examination, all assessable work for the Unit is to be submitted via Turnitin, using the links provided on the Unit iLearn page.

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON FINAL MARKS:** Please note, with respect to the marks you receive for work during the session, that the marks given are indicative only. Final marks will be determined after moderation. See further the note on **Results** in the **Policies and Procedures** section below.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u><a href="#">Tutorial Paper</a></u>	20%	No	Varies; before end of Week 8
<u><a href="#">Major Essay</a></u>	35%	No	Monday May 9th
<u><a href="#">Participation</a></u>	15%	No	End of Semester
<u><a href="#">Examination</a></u>	30%	No	Examination Period

### Tutorial Paper

Due: **Varies; before end of Week 8**

Weighting: **20%**

The student must write a c. 1,000 word short essay based on one of the weekly tutorial discussion topics of their choice from Weeks 2-7. It must be handed in within a week of the relevant tutorial. Tutorial Short Papers are to be handed in via Turnitin, using the link on the relevant weekly section of the Unit iLearn page.

For Weeks 2-7 (and 9-12) you will find a number of questions on the document(s) set, and an overall interpretative question. (There is no Tutorial topic for Weeks 8 and 13.) All of these questions ought to be prepared for the weekly Tutorial discussion. When you decide to hand in the short paper based on a particular week's topic from Weeks 2-7, you should write on the overall interpretative question, using the individual questions as a guide as to what ought to be discussed.

The Short Papers are exercises in careful and critical reading of documentary sources. Their aim is to develop skills of analysis and deduction, and the ability to write a lucid short answer to a precise set of questions. They are *not* primarily exercises in the collection of the opinions of others, even if those others are great scholars. The assignments will be marked primarily on *your understanding of the sources themselves*.

The short paper will be graded on attention to the details of the ancient sources, proper citation of those sources, clarity of presentation, good expression and grammatical accuracy.

*Please note that essay form is required* for all work submitted. Point form or extended notes are not good enough. Footnotes should be given, and should conform to the rules laid out in “Assignment Presentation: Style Guide”, which is available on the Unit iLearn Page.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;

## Major Essay

Due: **Monday May 9th**

Weighting: **35%**

Major essay topics are to be chosen from the list of topics, with introductory bibliographies, which will be made available before the fourth week of Semester. Students may also negotiate for an alternative topic with Dr. Forbes. All Major Essays are to be submitted **via Turnitin** on or before Monday May 9th. The submission link will be found on the Unit iLearn page.

Wider reading is required for the essays. Referencing should follow the guidelines in the “Assignment Presentation: Style Guide”, which is (again) available from the Unit iLearn page. Footnotes and a full alphabetical Bibliography are required.

The essay will be graded on attention to the details of the ancient sources, understanding of the wider scholarly literature on the chosen topic, proper citation of both the ancient evidence and modern scholarship, clarity of presentation, good expression and grammatical accuracy.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and

experiences;

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Participation

Due: **End of Semester**

Weighting: **15%**

Internal students will be assessed on their contribution to Tutorials throughout the Unit. External students will be assessed on their participation in the weekly Online Forum (iLearn) and their attendance at and contribution to the Saturday April 14th On Campus Session. Participation will be graded based on the relevance and clarity of students' contributions to the tutorial discussion, and the evidence of preparatory reading for and understanding of the tutorial questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;

## Examination

Due: **Examination Period**

Weighting: **30%**

The examination will run for two hours. Students will be asked to answer four questions: two precirculated document-based questions and two unseen questions from a range of approximately six.

The examination answers will be graded on the student's understanding of the major areas of the Unit, attention to the details of the ancient sources, clarity of presentation, good expression and grammatical accuracy. In the case of the two pre-circulated document questions they will also be graded in terms of evidence of independent research into the selected documents.

The University Examination period in the First Semester of 2018 is from Tuesday June 14th to Friday July 1st. You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations at:

<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>. The only exception to sitting an examination at the designated time is documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available under the Extension and Special

Consideration section of this Unit Guide.

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process, the examination will normally be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, that is, the final day of the official examination period.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## **Delivery and Resources**

### **Technology:**

Lectures will be given live and also made available on Echo360. Visual materials used in lectures will be taken from the main Unit Booklet or made available as PDF files on iLearn. Brief bibliographies, lists of people, places and technical terms will be made available for each lecture on iLearn.

A computer and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement. You will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader, as most Unit documents are provided in PDF format. This software is freely available on the Internet. Please consult the Course Convenor for any further, more specific requirements.

Face-to-face Tutorials will be held for Internal students; for External students there will be the On Campus Session, regular postings on iLearn and discussion on the weekly Online Forum. External students who can come to Internal tutorials are welcome to do so.

### **Lectures and Tutorials:**

For lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetable website: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>. This website will display up-to-date information on your classes and classroom locations.

At the time of publication class times are as follows:

Lecture times: Monday 1pm, C5A226; Wednesday 2pm midday, Y3A 212. Where the Monday

lecture falls on a public holiday, the lecture will be pre-recorded and made available via Echo360 as usual.

Tutorial times: Monday 2pm and 3pm, W5C 211; Wednesday 3pm, Y3A 212. Other tutorials may be organised, depending on student numbers. Where the Monday tutorial falls on a public holiday, special arrangements will be announced the week before.

## Changes since the last offering of this Unit:

No significant changes.

## Books you will need:

The required Text Books for the Unit are P.J. Achtemeier et al., eds., *Introducing the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 2000), and S. Neill & N.T. Wright, eds., *The Interpretation of the New Testament (1861-1986)* (Oxford, 1988).

If students want a more conventional narrative history, I recommend either P.W. Barnett's *Jesus and the Rise of Early Christianity* (Downer's Grove, IVP, 1999) or Ben Witherington III's *New Testament History: a Narrative Account* (Grand Rapids, Baker / Carlisle, Paternoster, 2001). They are both available in Reserve, and are regularly referred to in the weekly reading lists.

You will (of course) require a copy of the New Testament in a modern translation. It will be the basis of nearly all work in tutorials. The R.S.V., N.R.S.V., Jerusalem Bible, N.I.V., N.A.S.B. and E.S.V. versions are all acceptable: if you have another version please check with the lecturer. The King James ("Authorised Version") is *not* recommended; its translation is over 400 years old.

## Other Material:

The Main Unit booklet, a PDF file of introductory material, Unit requirements, the Weekly schedule, Tutorial questions and full Bibliographies will be made available on iLearn. There is no need to print it all out; in most cases only 2-3 pages per week will be needed in class.

## Unit Schedule

Week 1	Monday February 26th:  Lecture 1: Aims and Scope of the Course, and the Hellenistic World.  Lecture 2: The Hellenistic Kingdoms and the Jews: the Maccabean Revolt.  Tutorial: Unit Structure and Requirements. General Discussion.
Week 2	Monday March 5th:  Lecture 3: National survival in an age of superpowers: Hasmoneans and Herods.  Lecture 4: Schools of thought in 1st Century Judaism 1: Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots etc.  Tutorial: The origins of the "Septuagint" ("LXX") translation of the Hebrew Bible. For tutorial details see the relevant week's materials.

Week 3	<p>Monday March 12th:</p> <p>Lecture 5: Schools of Thought in 1st Century Judaism 2: the Pharisees.</p> <p>Lecture 6: The Development of Apocalyptic Literature.</p> <p>Tutorial: "Hellenisation" in Judea.</p>
Week 4	<p>Monday March 19th:</p> <p>Lecture 7: What is a Gospel? The Literary Form and Origins of the Synoptic Gospels.</p> <p>Lecture 8: Evaluating the Synoptic Tradition: Methods of Study.</p> <p>Tutorial: Gospel Accounts in parallel.</p>
Week 5	<p>Monday March 26th:</p> <p>Lecture 9: Evaluating the Synoptic Gospels 2: Methodology and Results.</p> <p>Lecture 10: John's Gospel in Recent Study.</p> <p>Tutorial: More Gospel Accounts in parallel.</p>
Week 6	<p>Monday April 2nd:</p> <p>Lecture 11: Models for Understanding the Historical Jesus.</p> <p>Lecture 12: The Parables of Jesus and the Kingdom of God.</p> <p>Tutorial: Parables.</p>
Week 7	<p>Monday April 9th:</p> <p>Lecture 13: Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom in its Social Context.</p> <p>Lecture 14: A Chronological Outline of Jesus' Career.</p> <p>Tutorial: The "Sermon on the Mount".</p> <p>External Students' On Campus Day, <b>Saturday April 14th</b>, at 10 A.M.</p>
Mid-Semester Break	Monday April 16th - Friday April 27th
Week 8	<p>Monday April 30th:</p> <p>Lecture 15: The Problem of Jesus' own view of his role in history.</p> <p>Lecture 16: The Final Week: The Trial and Death of Jesus.</p> <p>There is no Tutorial this week.</p>
Week 9	<p>Monday May 7th: <b>Major Essay due.</b></p> <p>Lecture 17: The Tradition of the Resurrection of Jesus</p> <p>Lecture 18: The "Acts" as an Historical Source for Early Christianity and its environment.</p> <p>Tutorial: The Speeches of Peter in Acts.</p>



Week 10	Monday May 14th:  Lecture 19: The Earliest Period of Christianity  Lecture 20: The Wider World: the religious environment of Early Christianity.  Tutorial: Stephen and the “Hellenists”, Acts 6-7.
Week 11	Monday May 21st:  Lecture 21: Jewish Christianity.  Lecture 22: Introduction to St. Paul.  Tutorial: The Pauline “churches”.
Week 12	Monday May 28th:  Lecture 23: Experience and Faith in Paul.  Lecture 24: Revelation and Tradition in Paul.  Tutorial: 1 Corinthians.
Week 13	Monday June 4th:  Lecture 25: Other Forms of Early Christianity  Lecture 26: The Book of Revelation as Christian Prophecy and Apocalyptic.  There is no Tutorial this week.
	Tuesday June 14th: The Examination Period begins.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>).

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Submission of Work:

All assessable work for the Unit is to be submitted via Turnitin, using the links on the Unit iLearn page.

## Extensions:

Extensions can only be granted on the basis of an application (though Ask.mq) for Special Consideration. Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

## Unit requirements:

To complete the unit you will need to submit all assessment tasks and achieve an overall mark of 50% or above. You will also need to attend tutorials regularly. If you are unable to attend any two tutorials or more (Internal students), you will need to explain your absence to the convenor in writing.

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/).

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

#### Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific

knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;

## **Assessment tasks**

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## **Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- The student will learn from a variety of ancient text types about the varieties of early Christian thinking;
- demonstrate a comprehension of ancient world-views and cultural concepts;
- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- conduct independent research on a chosen topic;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Paper
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Examination

## Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation

## Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- contextualise particular ancient documents within their wider cultural environment;
- show an awareness of the complexity of ancient accounts of past events and experiences;
- engage with and respond critically to a variety of scholarly opinions;
- and formulate an independent view in dialogue with both ancient evidence and modern interpretations.

## The Aim of the Unit

This Unit is designed to introduce students to a range of the historical questions which arise from the study of the New Testament, in the context of Second Temple Judaism, late Hellenistic culture and the Roman Empire. The focus will be on the historical and cultural context of the life of Jesus, the available sources of information on Jesus' public career, the movement he founded, and its development in approximately the first sixty years of its existence.

The unit is based on the historical study of the New Testament documents and other contemporary ancient evidence, and investigates both the historical contours of the period and career of Jesus and the early Christian communities; and the literary genres and ideas of the New Testament, in their Jewish and Graeco-Roman context. No previous familiarity with the New Testament is assumed.